

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. M: 35-74

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Earll House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 3609 Thornapple Street _____ not for publication

city, town Chevy Chase _____ vicinity of

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Present Use
_____ district)	_____ public	_____ agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	_____ commercial
_____ structure	_____ both	_____ educational
_____ site		_____ entertainment
_____ object		_____ government
		_____ industrial
		_____ military
		_____ museum
		_____ park
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
		_____ religious
		_____ scientific
		_____ transportation
		_____ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Robert T. and M.T. Hanlon

street & number 3609 Thornapple Street telephone no:

city, town Chevy Chase state and zip code Maryland 20815

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse Tax Map and Parcel HN342; Lots 3&4, Bl. 4

city, town Rockville state Maryland. Liber and Folio 03974/0468

6. Primary Location of Additional Data

_____ Individually Listed in the National Register
_____ Contributing Resource in National Register District
_____ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
_____ Determined Eligible for the National Register
_____ Recorded by HABS/HAER
_____ HSR or Research report at MHT
_____ Other:

7. Description

Survey No.

M:35-74

Condition

☒ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ altered

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Resource Count:

See attached

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 7:2

The Earll House, built c1894, is located in the Village of Chevy Chase, Section 5 at 3609 Thornapple Street. A grand, 2-1/2-story frame structure, the Queen Anne style residence is set upon a raised foundation, has a cross gable roof and features a wrap around porch. The walls of the house are clad with fishscale wood shingles on the second story and in the pediment and are stuccoed on the first story.

The gable front, south elevation facing Thornapple Street is four bays wide, clad with fishscale wood shingles, and includes an enclosed pediment in the gable end. The first story consists of a door and three single, 1/1 windows, while the second story has four, 1/1 windows. The half-story, located in the pedimented gable end is defined by a centrally located Palladian-influenced window, composed of an 8/1 sash window flanked by 6/1 sash windows, and surmounted by a blind keystone arch. The pediment is separated from the second story by a wide, unadorned frieze board and a bracketed, but only slightly overhanging roof. All of the first story windows have slightly projecting wood lintels and shutters. Second story windows, also with shutters, simply abut the frieze board, while the pediment window has a full architrave surround.

The highly decorative porch extends the full width of the front facade and wraps around to both east and west side elevations. Narrow, turned columns are connected with a balustrade and spindle work frieze. The porch roof is half hipped, with a pediment located above the entrance bay.

8. Significance

Survey No.

M:35-74

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	c. 1894	Builder/Architect
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check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D		
and/or						
Applicable Exceptions:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> F

Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> state	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local
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HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture and Community Planning

Resource Type: Individual

Category: Residential

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Residential

Known Design Source:

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 8:2

The Earll House (c1894) has outstanding historical and architectural significance. The earliest house in Otterbourne, the residence was built by Robert Edward Earll, one of the founders of this subdivision which was heavily influenced by the Chevy Chase Land Company. The Earll House is an outstanding, high-style example of Queen Anne architecture, exhibiting such features as a Chippendale-inspired balustrade and Palladianesque gable window surmounted by a blind keystone arch.

Otterbourne is a subdivision established in the Chevy Chase area by a group of four investors: Robert E. Earll, Eugene B. Clark, Raymond Geare, and John Frank Ellis. The men purchased 14.4 acres from the Williams family in 1892, two years after the Chevy Chase Land Company purchased land to the south and west. For convenience, the plat for Otterbourne was filed under Ellis' name. The H-shaped plat was made in July 1894, oriented toward Brookville Road, an important early transportation route. The investors divided the lots among themselves with each one receiving a number equivalent to their respective interest in the original tract of land. Clark and Earll were the only two of the four to build and reside in Otterbourne.¹

Otterbourne investors clearly saw the advantage of the property's location immediately adjacent to the Land Company's development. The name Otterbourne is a reference to the medieval Ballad of Chevy Chase, which had been the origin for the name of the Chevy Chase Land Company's real estate enterprise. It was on the plains of Otterbourne in Scotland that the armies of Lord James Douglas and Sir Henry Percy met in their fabled battle. Otterbourne benefitted from its close proximity to the Rock Creek Railway (1890), which ran along the newly established Connecticut Avenue. Early residents had access to the trolley by way of a boardwalk from Delaware Street (formerly Dalkeith) to Connecticut Avenue. Otterbourne was absorbed into Section 5, and by the 1920s the east-west cross streets were extended out to Connecticut Avenue and Percy Street was renamed Thornapple Street.²

The Earll House was the first house built in Otterbourne and is the only one of the early houses that was built in accordance with deed restrictions setting a minimum construction cost of \$2,000. Robert Edward Earll (1853-1896) and his wife Louise Harding Earll acquired the property in June 1894. The following year, improvements were assessed at \$2500. The deed of conveyance from Ellis carried the restriction that any house to be constructed was to cost no less

¹Equity Case #2400, 8-24-1908, describes the history of Otterbourne and its investors.

²Gwen Wright et al. "Chevy Chase, Maryland, Survey District: Survey Report: Phase Two," Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, June 1997. Otterbourne Plat, Plat Book 1: Page 1 [Filed July 9, 1894]. William Offutt, *History of Bethesda*, pp173-4.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 8:3

than \$2,000.³

The Earlls, who had lived in Washington, D. C. since their marriage in 1883, moved to Otterbourne c1894 with their five year old son, Donald Montgomery. Louise, a social reformer and educator, became immediately active as superintendant of the newly formed Chevy Chase Union Sunday School, beginning in 1895. Tragically, Robert Edward died in 1896.⁴

Louise Earll continued to live in the house and be an active member of the local community. She was president of the Otterbourne Citizens' Association from 1906-7. Louise Harding Earll, a leader in the Baptist Church, was instrumental in forming a community church by 1906 and construction of a church building at Connecticut Avenue and Shephard Street by 1908. She sold off most of the Otterbourne lots over the years. While the Earlls had at one time owned nearly all of the block on which their house was located, they continued to retain the house with four lots stretching east to Brookville Road.⁵

The Earll family sold their residence and property in 1921 to James and Mary Cummings. James Cummings was described in 1920 as an investigator with the Department of Justice, and in 1927 as a landscape architect. The Cummings family had previously lived on E. Underwood Street. James William Cummings (c1868-1935) grew up on the Cummings Farm (3309 Cummings Lane) and was the brother of Andrew Jackson "Cy" Cummings. His wife, Mary Elizabeth Green Cummings, was born c1877. The couple had eight children born between 1903 and 1914.⁶

The undeveloped land between the house and Brookville Road was retained until after 1941, when a brick Colonial Revival was constructed. In more recent years, another house was built between the latter and the Earll House. Despite its diminished setting, the Earll House is

³Deed JA 44:118 made June 21, 1894, and recorded July 9, 1894, conveyed from Ellis to Earll 34 lots and 2 part lots. The plat for Otterbourne, consisting of 68 lots arranged in four blocks, was made July 7, 1894 and filed July 9, 1894.

⁴The elder Earlls had another son, Ernest Harding (1886-1892).

⁵Biographical sketch of Louise Harding Earll in *Who's Who in the Nation's Capital*, 1926. U.S. Census 1910. Directories of 1911 and 1912 list Earlls at the house at Percy Street (now Thornapple).

⁶See MHT form M:35/78.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 8:4

significant historically and architecturally, retaining a high degree of its original integrity.⁷

⁷*Who's Who in the Nation's Capital*, 1926. Deed 308:333 (1921). Klinge Atlases, 1931 and 1941. Sanborn Map, 1927, corrected to 1958. Directories of 1911, 1912, 1915, 1927.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:35-74

See attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 12,500 Sq. Ft.

Quadrangle name

Quadrangle scale

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Clare Lise Cavicchi, Historic Preservation Planner		
organization	Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission	date	November 1998
street & number	8787 Georgia Avenue	telephone	301-563-3400
city or town	Silver Spring	state	Maryland 20910-3760

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 9:2

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Nelson, Justus C. *Nelson's Suburban Directory* (Washington, D.C.), 1912-1913.

Polk, R. L. *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory* (Washington, D.C.) 1927-1928.

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Hopkins, G.M. *Northern Virginia and Bethesda*, 1894.

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Prominent Personages of the Nation's Capital. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Times Co, 1924.

Tax Assessment Book, 1896-1906, Fourth Election District. Maryland State Archives Series T221, Annapolis, Maryland.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House
3609 Thornapple Street
Section 9:3

Secondary Sources:

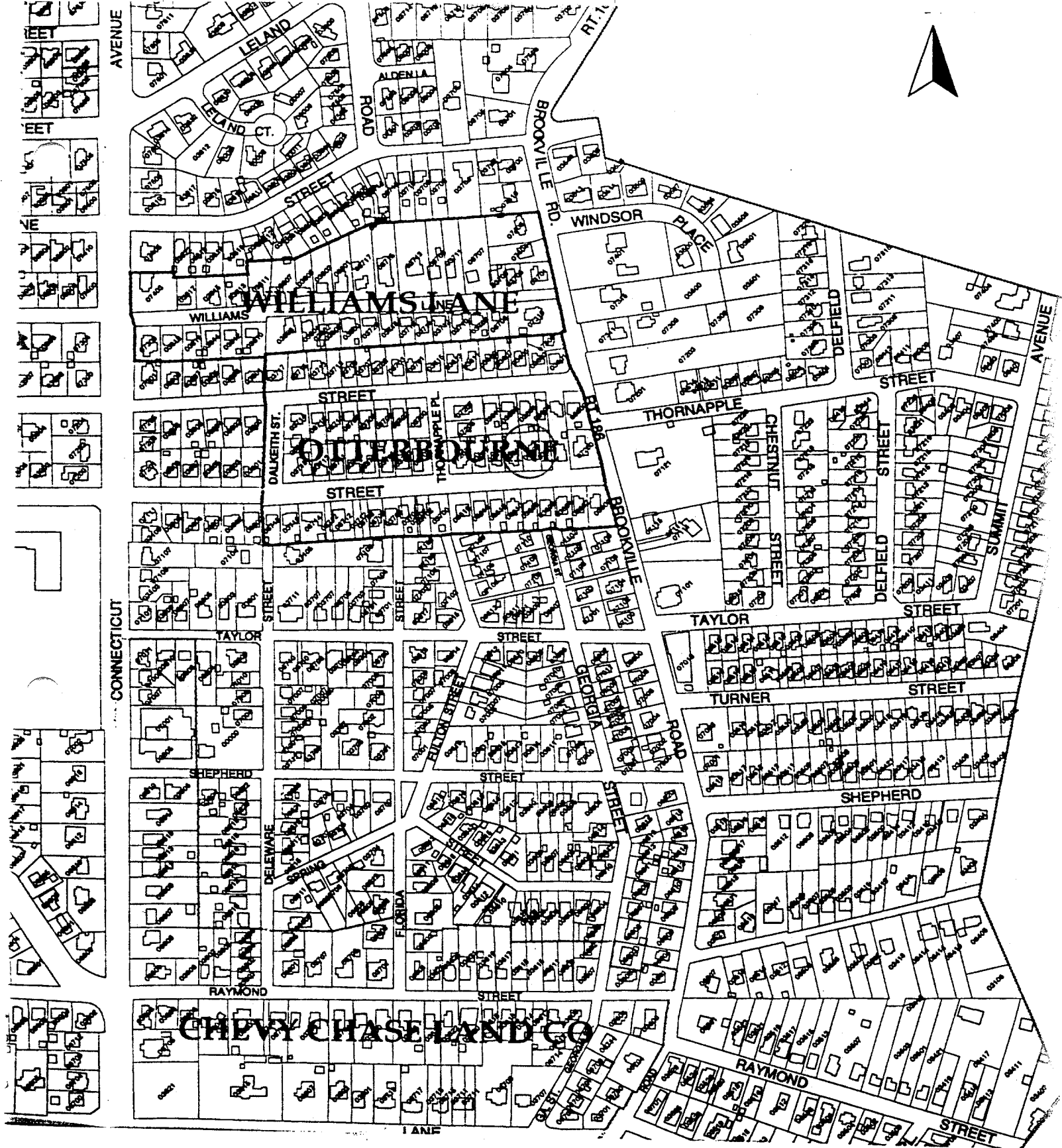
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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FORM
LOCATIONAL MAP

SURVEY NO.: M:35-74
PROPERTY NAME: Earll House
TOWN: Chevy Chase
COUNTY: MONTGOMERY

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/74 Earll House (c1894)
3609 Thornapple Street

